* Customs Duty on seconds and defective category of steel has been kept at the bound rate of 40%
* Pre-shipment inspection certification has been made mandatory for imports of seconds and defectives of all steel items; and
* Ministry of Steel has proposed certain more steps to further reduce import of seconds and defectives in the budget proposals for 2003-04.

(c) There has been a marginal decrease in the import of seconds and defectives in 2001 -02 compared to 2000-01, particularly in the category of HR Coils.

Restructuring of ailing steel plants

3267. SHRI DINA NATH MISHRA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering a restructuring package for revival of ailing steel projects, where about Rs. 35000 crore are locked;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have also analysed and identified causes of sickness of the projects and suggested steps, so that similar errors are not repeated in future; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJ KISHORETRIPATHY): (a) No specific restructuring package is under consideration by the Government for revival of the ailing private sector steel industry.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) and (d) The prevailing economic recession during the past few years as well as slump in prices are primarily responsible for the downturn in the steel industry. The high cost of servicing of old loans as well as high cost of power and freight are other problems besetting the industry. There are signs of revival during the past six months due to firming up of prices of steel products.

Production projects of SAIL

†3268. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that production is going on in many projects under Steel Authority of India Limited;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.